

AMENDMENT AND STATEMENT OF SUBSTANCE  
U.S. Appln. No. 10/773,294

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

- 1-7. (canceled).
8. (original): A process for producing a phenol novolak resin, comprising the steps of:
- (a) subjecting a phenol to a polycondensation reaction in the presence of an acid catalyst;
  - (b) removing water from a reaction system;
  - (c) decomposing, in the presence of an acid catalyst, the polycondensation product obtained in the step (a); and
  - (d) subjecting the resulting product to a polycondensation reaction with an aldehyde or a ketone.
- 9-13. (canceled).